



# Town of Groton, Connecticut

45 Fort Hill Road  
Groton, CT 06340-4394  
Town Clerk 860-441-6640  
Town Manager  
860-441-6630

## Meeting Minutes

### Representative Town Meeting

**Moderator Syma Ebbin, Representatives Karin Adams, Alicia T. Bauer, Portia Bordelon, Jordan Brayman, Clarence Casper, Kathy Chase, Bobbi Jo Cini, Mallory Doyle, Thomas Frickman, James Gustavson, Autumn Hanscom, Rosanne Kotowski, Brandon Marley, Douglas R. Marshall, Robert Martin, Jackie Massett, Bruce A. McDermott, Juan Melendez, Nancy Mello Miller, Roscoe Merritt, Doug Monaghan, Scott Newsome, Cutter Oliver, Richard Pasqualini, Sheila Perry, Shawn Powers, Carolann Quinn, Kate Richards, Reginald Stanford, Anni Rodgers, Judith Strode, Irma Streeter, James Streeter, Latisha Thompson, Patricia Wagner, Beverly Washington, Gary Welles, Michael Whitehouse, and Michael Whitney**

---

Wednesday, December 13, 2017

7:30 PM

Groton Senior Center

---

#### Regular Meeting

---

#### A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL BY TOWN CLERK

*Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.  
34 members were present and a quorum was declared.*

Members Present: Moderator Ebbin, Rep. Adams, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Brayman, Rep. Bordelon, Rep. Casper, Rep. Chase, Rep. Cini, Rep. Doyle, Rep. Frickman, Rep. Gustavson, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Hanscom, Rep. Marley, Rep. Marshall, Rep. Martin, Rep. Massett, Rep. Mello Miller, Rep. Melendez, Rep. Merritt, Rep. Monaghan, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Oliver, Rep. Perry, Rep. Powers, Rep. Quinn, Rep. Richards, Rep. Rogers, Rep. Stanford, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Strode, Rep. Thompson, Rep. Wagner, Rep. Washington, Rep. Welles, Rep. Whitehouse and Rep. Whitney  
Members Absent: Rep. Marquardt, Rep. McDermott and Rep. Pasqualini Jr.

*Also present were Town Manager John Burt, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Michael Graner, City Mayor Keith Hendrick, Town Mayor Patrice Granatosky, Town Councilors Rachael Franco, Conrad Heede, Lian Obrey and Juliette Parker, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher, and Assistant Town Clerk Dawn Rahilly.*

#### B. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND SALUTE TO THE FLAG

*A moment of silence and Salute to the Flag was lead by Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher.*

#### C. ORGANIZATION OF THE THIRTY-FIRST RTM

##### 1. Administration of oath to all representatives by Town Clerk

*Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher administered the Oath of Office to the thirty-eight members-elect that were present.*

##### 2. Adoption of Rules

##### 2017-0280 Adoption of Rules

RESOLUTION APPROVING ADOPTION OF RULES AND PROCEDURES OF THE THIRTY-FIRST RTM

BE IT RESOLVED,

that the Rules and Procedures of the Thirtieth RTM are temporarily adopted as the Rules and Procedures of the Thirty-first RTM elected November 7, 2017.

**A motion was made by Rep. Monaghan, seconded by Rep. Adams, that this matter be Adopted.**

*Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher stated that the members are to adopt the rules of the thirtieth RTM as temporary rules until they adopt permanent rules.*

**The motion carried unanimously**

\*\*

**3. Election of Moderator**

*Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher called for nominations for the office of Moderator.*

*Rep. Massett nominated Rep. Scott Newsome to be Moderator, seconded by Rep. J. Streeter.*

*Rep. Syma Ebbin was nominated by Rep. Richards, Seconded by Rep. Powers.*

*A motion to close the nominations was made by Rep. Monaghan, seconded by Rep. Powers and so voted unanimously.*

*Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher declared the nominations closed.*

*Rep. Newsome spoke to the members regarding his years of experience on the RTM and asked for their support.*

*Rep. Ebbin introduced herself to the members, spoke of her prior years of serving on the RTM and asked for their support.*

*The vote for Rep. Ebbin for office of Moderator was 24 in favor, 13 opposed, and 1 present, but not voting. Opposed: Reps. Adams, Chase, Merritt, Massett, Marley, I. Streeter, J. Streeter, Martin, Frickman, Casper, Cini, Newsome, and Quinn. Rep. Kotowski was present, but did not vote.*

**4. Presentation of gavel to Moderator**

*Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher presented the gavel to Moderator Syma Ebbin.*

**5. Brief recess to allow Moderator to review correspondence, etc.**

*Rep. Marley departed at 7:45 p.m.*

*37 members present.*

*The meeting resumed at 7:57 p.m.*

*Members Present: Moderator Ebbin, Rep. Adams, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Brayman, Rep. Bordelon, Rep. Casper, Rep. Chase, Rep. Cini, Rep. Doyle, Rep. Frickman, Rep. Gustavson, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Hanscom, Rep. Marshall, Rep. Martin, Rep. Massett, Rep. Mello Miller, Rep. Melendez, Rep. Merritt, Rep. Monaghan, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Oliver, Rep. Perry, Rep. Powers, Rep. Quinn, Rep. Richards, Rep. Rogers, Rep. Stanford, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Strobe, Rep. Thompson, Rep. Wagner, Rep. Washington, Rep. Welles, Rep. Whitehouse and Rep. Whitney*

*Members Absent: Rep. Marley, Rep. Marquardt, Rep. McDermott and Rep. Pasqualini Jr.*

**D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 11, 2017**

*A motion to approve the minutes was made by Rep. Massett, seconded by Rep. Adams. The vote on approval of the minutes carried 35 in favor, 2 abstentions. Abstaining: Reps. Kotowski and Whitehouse.*

**E. CITIZENS' PETITIONS**

*Patrice Granatosky, 30 North Prospect Street, welcomed the new members of the RTM and thanked them for volunteering to serve the Town of Groton.*

*Michael Kane, 51 Jupiter Point Road, identified himself as being a current member of Planning Commission for 15 years. He explained the different functions of the Planning Commission and the Zoning Commission and urged member to keep the Planning and Zoning Commissions separate.*

*Lian Obrey, 8 Vista Point Road, thanked the members for the time they will be devoting to the RTM. She stated she feels that the RTM is the best form of government and urged all members to be present and prepared at all meetings and to make their voices heard.*

**F. APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY RULES & PROCEDURES COMMITTEE****2017-0281 Appointment of Temporary Rules & Procedures Committee**

APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY RULES & PROCEDURES COMMITTEE TO PREPARE RULES FOR THE THIRTY-FIRST RTM

**Adopted**

*Moderator Ebbin appointed the following members as the Temporary Rules & Procedures Committee to review and recommend Rules and Procedures for the Thirty-first RTM:*

- 1. Rep. Monaghan*
- 2. Rep. Newsome*
- 3. Rep. Richards*

**G. RECEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS**

*Rep. McDermott notified the Town Clerk he was unable to attend tonight's meeting.*

*Moderator Ebbin welcomed new members elected at this evening's caucus, Reps. Nancy Mello Miller, Anni Rodgers, Beverly Washington and Michael Whitehouse.*

*Certificates of Appreciation for serving on the Thirtieth RTM were presented and Town Councilors Lian Obrey and Juliette Parker were present to receive their certificate.*

**H. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER****1. Financial report**

*Town Manager John Burt reported that the unaudited Fund Balance as of June 30, 2017 is approximately \$10.9 million, which is 9.1% of the FYE 2018 General Fund Adopted Budget. He stated that the final numbers for FYE 2017 will be available once all of the year-end journal entries have been posted. He stated that General Contingency budget for FYE 2018 was appropriated at \$650,000 with a current balance of \$344,376. He reported that as of November 30th, the following transfers have been approved, \$298,124 for wage increases and \$7,500 that equals fifty percent for two City of Groton TIF Districts. He reported that the unaudited Capital Reserve Fund balance as of November 30, 2017 is estimated at \$1.2 million. This increase from the previous month is due to projects closed as of June 30, 2017 are now reflected in the fund balance.*

**2. Monthly briefing**

*Town Manager John Burt highlighted various items from the Town Manager News including his directive from the Committee of the Whole to request bids for the Town Attorney services. He mentioned that Cardinal Honda is collecting money for the Special Olympics CT on December 16 and 17, 2017. He reported that on December 14, 2017 the Mystic Marriott and Groton Town Police are having a toy drive to benefit the Children & Families Agency of SECT. He reported that Groton Human Services is providing 500 local families with a holiday meal. He stated that they are accepting donations Monday thru Friday, 8:30 - 4:30 until December 20th. Town Manager John Burt urged members to look at the new Economic Development website [www.exploremoregroton.com](http://www.exploremoregroton.com). He noted that it is a fantastic website which will be a big benefit for promoting development in the area. He mentioned that he has received many inquiries as to when the Mystic Education Center will begin the bid process to develop that property. He stated that the State's review is complete and that it should be released on December 15, 2017. He stated that bids will be due February 15, 2018.*

**I. REPORT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

*No report.*

\*\*\*

\*\*\*

**J. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

*Superintendent of Schools Dr. Michael Graner reported that Groton Public Schools had recently been awarded a five-year Magnet School Assistance Program Grant that will provide \$4 million in funding that will allow both middle schools to operate as Magnet Schools beginning fall 2018. He stated that Cutler Middle School will become an Arts and Humanities Magnet School and West Side Middle School will become a S.T.E.M. Magnet School. He announced that Jemal Davis has been selected as the new Assistant Principal at West Side Middle School. Dr. Graner gave an update on Groton 2020 Plan, mentioning that a small team of Central Office administrators and both Middle School Principals have been meeting with architects to review the educational specifications for the 2020 Plan. He stated that the Board of Education had three incumbent members re-elected, Andrea Ackerman, Rosemary Robertson, and Lee White, along with a new member Jane Guilini. He announced that Gary Baker resigned his position and the Board elected Jay Weitlauf to fill his seat. Dr. Graner reported that Groton Public Schools has been designated an Alliance District. He stated that an Alliance District program provides financial and programmatic support for the 30 lowest performing districts in the State. He explained some of the financial implications. He stated that Groton will receive the same Education Cost Share Grant amount, \$25,040,000, from the State as it did last year.*

*In response to Rep. Powers, Dr. Graner confirmed Groton will not be penalized by the State because the Town Council added back the \$1.5 million.*

*Responding to Rep. Cini, Dr. Graner explained that all Groton students would be eligible for the lottery to attend the two new Magnets Schools.*

*Rep. Kotowski questioned whether we would lose the extra funding once the students were performing better and we lose the Alliance District designation.*

*Dr. Graner explained that we do not get any extra funding. He stated that the funding remains level, which is better than a 2% reduction.*

*Rep. Kotowski asked if having the Alliance District designation, would the normal Minimum Budget Requirement condition be eliminated?*

*Dr. Graner replied that the Minimum Budget Requirement is the appropriated amount.*

*In response to Rep. Whitehouse, Dr. Graner explained Groton's Magnet Schools are intra-district. He stated that inter-district schools are funded partially by tuition. He stated that in addition, the state pays \$9,000 for each student. He mentioned that five years ago, the state put a moratorium on inter-district Magnet Schools.*

*Rep. Whitney commented that we anticipated \$20 million from the State Education Cost Share Grant last budget and now it is up to \$25 million. He stated that if we want to get beyond the Alliance District Designation, we need to spend more than just the Minimum Budget Requirement. He noted that we spend less per student than our neighboring towns. He questioned our ranking statewide and asked if we have a performance plan in place.*

*Dr. Graner responded by noting that the other three districts get approximately \$4 million to implement the plan, but that the Legislature allocated no money for Groton. He explained that there is currently a vibrant reading and writing plan, math workshop series, as well as implementing the Middle Years Program for the International Baccalaureate Program. He stated that some of those components will be a part of the plan. He stated that there is a plan in place with or without the Alliance District Designation.*

*Rep. Bordelon mentioned the \$4 million grant that we have for the Magnet Schools. She questioned as to how the Magnet Schools will transfer to the 2020 Plan. She inquired about transportation for the new Magnet Schools and whether it is included in the funding. She questioned why it took so long for us to be notified about being designated as an Alliance District. Her wish is to see more funding for remedial support now that we have the Alliance District Designation.*

*Dr. Graner explained that when the two Magnet Schools from the 2020 Plan come together, there will be pathways within the school for STEM and one for the Arts & Humanities. He stated that there may also be a third non-designated pathway. He stated that the pathway will be the way the program is integrated. He noted that transportation would be funded. He explained that the reason for the delay of the notification for the Alliance District Designation was because it is a five year program that expired on June 30, 2017. He state that until the Legislature appropriated funds for the Alliance District Program, there was no program. He reaffirmed that West Side Middle School will continue to be designated as a Title I School and that they will be adding Literacy and Math Specialists to that school.*

*Moderator Ebbin reminded all members to please notify the Town Clerk prior to departing.*

*Floor Leader Richards called for a Democratic caucus.*

*Moderator Ebbin recessed the meeting at 8:50 p.m to allow the Democrats to caucus.*

*Reps. Brayman, Kotowski and Thompson left the meeting at 8:55 p.m.  
34 members present.*

*The meeting reconvened at 9:10 p.m.*

*Members Present: Moderator Ebbin, Rep. Adams, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Bordelon, Rep. Casper, Rep. Chase, Rep. Cini, Rep. Doyle, Rep. Frickman, Rep. Gustavson, Rep. Hanscom, Rep. Marshall, Rep. Martin, Rep. Massett, Rep. Mello Miller, Rep. Melendez, Rep. Merritt, Rep. Monaghan, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Oliver, Rep. Perry, Rep. Powers, Rep. Quinn, Rep. Richards, Rep. Rogers, Rep. Stanford, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Strode, Rep. Wagner, Rep. Washington, Rep. Welles, Rep. Whitehouse and Rep. Whitney  
Members Absent: Rep. Brayman, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Marley, Rep. Marquardt, Rep. McDermott, Rep. Pasqualini Jr. and Rep. Thompson*

*\*\*\*\*\**

#### **K. BUDGET DISCUSSIONS**

*None.*

*\*\*\*\*\**

#### **L. OTHER BUSINESS**

*Moderator Ebbin explained that there could be no discussion on the Adoption of Ordinance to Designate the Planning Commission the Planning and Zoning Commission and to Abolish the Zoning Commission because it had not been referred to committee.*

*A motion to suspend the RTM Rule 6.5.3 to allow discussion of the Adoption of Ordinance to Designate the Planning Commission the Planning and Zoning Commission and Abolish the Zoning Commission was made by Rep. Whitehouse, seconded by Rep. Gustavson.*

*Rep. Monaghan raised a POINT OF ORDER questioning discussion on the motion to suspend the rules.*

*Moderator Ebbin explained the discussion would be held after the vote and that a motion to*

*suspend the rules is not debatable.*

*Rep. Whitehouse explained that the reason for the motion is because the RTM does not have committees in place and therefore can not send the ordinance to a committee to discuss it. The only way to consider this Ordinance is to suspend the rules.*

*The vote by ROLL CALL to Suspend the Rules carried 30 in favor, 3 opposed, 1 abstention. IN FAVOR: Reps. Adams, Bordelon, Casper, Chase, Cini, Doyle, Ebbin, Gustavson, Hanscom, Marshall, Martin, Massett, Melendez, Merritt, Oliver, Perry, Powers, Richards, Stanford, I. Streeter, J. Streeter, Strode, Wagner, Welles, Whitney, Newsome, Mello Miller, Whitehouse, Rodgers and Washington. OPPOSED: Reps. Bauer, Frickman and Quinn. ABSTENTIONS: Rep. Monaghan.*

*Reps. Bauer, Bordelon, Casper, Frickman, Marshall, Massett, Merritt, Monaghan, Newsome, Powers, Quinn, Richards, I. Streeter, J. Streeter, Welles, Whitehouse and Whitney participated in a lengthy discussion, asking questions and voicing concerns regarding this ordinance.*

*Moderator Ebbin appointed Rep. Whitney as Moderator Pro Tempore to enable her to join the discussion on this issue.*

*In response to Rep. J. Streeter, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher stated that two-thirds of the entire membership is twenty-eight members, which is what is needed to pass this motion. She stated that there are currently thirty-four members present. She stated that there is no motion to veto on the floor at this time.*

*A motion to schedule a Special Meeting for next Wednesday on this topic was made by Rep. Ebbin, and seconded by Rep. Melendez.*

*Rep. J. Streeter raised a POINT OF ORDER requesting a roll call vote on the motion on the floor.*

*The vote by ROLL CALL on the motion to schedule a Special Meeting next Wednesday FAILED with 9 in favor, 25 opposed. IN FAVOR: Reps. Bordelon, Casper, Ebbin, Gustavson, Hanscom, Melendez, Perry, Richards and Rodgers. OPPOSED: Reps. Adams, Bauer, Chase, Cini, Doyle, Frickman, Marshall, Martin, Massett, Merritt, Monaghan, Oliver, Powers, Quinn, Stanford, I. Streeter, J. Streeter, Strode, Wagner, Welles, Whitney, Newsome, Mello Miller, Whitehouse and Washington.*

**2017-0172**

**Adoption of Ordinance to Designate the Planning Commission the Planning and Zoning Commission and to Abolish the Zoning Commission**

ADOPTION OF AN ORDINANCE TO DESIGNATE THE PLANNING COMMISSION AS THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION FOR THE TOWN OF GROTON AND TO ABOLISH THE ZONING COMMISSION

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN OF GROTON THAT:

1. Although the Planning and Zoning Commissions have provided the townspeople of the Town of Groton consistently exemplary service, changing economic and other conditions, including the increasing uncertainty of the State of Connecticut's ability to provide revenues to the municipalities, have caused the Town Council to reconsider the utility of having two separate commissions. Information obtained by the Town Council strongly indicates that it would be in the Town's best interest to create a combined Planning and Zoning Commission in order to, among other things, unify and expedite the processes of obtaining zoning approvals and thus encourage economic development.
2. Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 8-4a, the Planning Commission is hereby

designated as the Planning and Zoning Commission for the Town of Groton, and said Planning and Zoning Commission shall have all powers granted to planning commissions, zoning commissions, and planning and zoning commissions by the laws of the State of Connecticut, including without limitation the powers granted planning and zoning commissions by Chapters 124 and 126 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

3. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall consist of seven regular members and three alternates, all of whom shall serve five-year terms, and each of whom shall be a resident elector of the Town and appointed by a majority vote of the Town Council. The present terms of office of the five regular and three alternate members of the Planning Commission, including any currently vacant seats, shall continue until their current expiration date. Thereafter, the Town Council shall appoint regular and alternate members for terms of five-years. The terms of the two additional seats for regular members created hereby shall terminate on December 31, 2021, and shall thereafter be filled for five year terms. No regular or alternate member of the Planning and Zoning commission may concurrently be a regular or alternate member of the Town of Groton Zoning Board of Appeals.

4. Alternate members shall have all the powers and duties conferred on alternate members of a planning and zoning commission by the General Statutes. Alternates shall be designated to act according to a regular rotation process so as to assure to the extent practicable equal participation by each in the affairs of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

5. The Town Council shall by an affirmative vote of five fill all vacancies of the regular and alternate members of the Planning and Zoning Commission for the unexpired portion of any term.

6. The Zoning Commission shall be abolished and shall cease to exist and the Planning Commission shall become the Planning and Zoning Commission on the earlier of January 4, 2019 or 45 days after the day on which written certification is given by the Director of the Office of Planning and Development Services to the Town Council and Town Clerk that the comprehensive re-write of the Zoning Regulations pending before the Zoning Commission on the date of passage of this Ordinance by the Town Council has been adopted by the Zoning Commission. As of the date on which the Zoning Commission is abolished hereunder, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall have jurisdiction over all applications, referrals, and other matters of any kind pending before the Zoning Commission and the Planning Commission.

7. This Ordinance shall be effective 45 days after enactment by the Council unless vetoed by the RTM.

*A motion to Veto the Ordinance was made by Rep. Massett, seconded by Rep. Powers.*

*Rep. J. Streeter requested a ROLL CALL vote on the motion on the floor.*

*Rep. Newsome raised a POINT OF ORDER explaining that an affirmative vote would mean that you are not in favor of combining the Commissions.*

*Rep. Casper clarified that vetoing this particular ordinance does not mean that you are against merging the commissions.*

*The ROLL CALL vote to VETO the Ordinance to Designate the Planning Commission the Planning and Zoning Commission and to Abolish the Zoning Commission FAILED with 11 in favor, 21 opposed, and 2 abstentions. IN FAVOR: Reps. Bordelon, Casper, Ebbin, Gustavson, Hanscom, Marshall, Melendez, Merritt, Perry, Wagner and Welles. OPPOSED: Reps. Adams, Bauer, Chase, Cini, Doyle, Frickman, Martin, Massett, Oliver, Powers, Quinn, Richards, I. Streeter, J. Streeter, Strobe, Whitney, Newsome, Mello Miller, Whitehouse, Rodgers and Washington. ABSTENTIONS: Reps. Monaghan and Stanford.*

**M. ADJOURNMENT**

*A motion to adjourn at 10:06 p.m. was made by Rep. Monaghan, seconded by Rep. Whitehouse and so voted unanimously.*

*Attest:*

*Betsy Moukawsher, Town Clerk  
Clerk of the RTM*

*Dawn G. Rahilly, Assistant Town Clerk*